(f) if so what are the reasons for delaying the relief to TB and Leprosy patients?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) to (d) While fixing the ceiling prices of Rifampicin formulations overages have been allowed as per provisions of DPCO, 1987.

(e) and (f) Prices of all formulations based on Rifampicin including combination formulations have already been, reduced on the basis of reduced price of bulk, drug Rifampicin.

Telephone rates in Delhi

2000. SHRI SHAMIM HASHML Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are aware that the telephonic rates now in force in Delhi are higher than prevailing in many advanced countries including scandinavion countries like Norway and if so what are the present comparative rates in force;

(b) whether Government are aware that lage surplus funds with Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, Delhi are now being wasted and misused;

(c) whether Government are aware that underground cables in South Delhi areas like Panchsheel Enclave after replacing last year are once again being replaced due to installation of defective cables; and

(d) whether an inquiry in this regard will be made and action taken against the defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO) (a) Charges for telephone services are fixed taking into consideration the cost of operation and maintenance of the telecommunication and the requirement of resources to meet the ever increasing demands for expansion and modernisation of such services in the country. More-ever, the cost of providing the service differs from country to country However, it may be mentioned that charges for various telecommunication services are higher in a number of countries as com- pared to those in India.

(b) It has been confirmed from Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited that there is no misuse or wastage of their surplus funds.

(c) It is confirmed by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited that there is no such case where cables are once again being replaced.

(d) In view of (c) above, the question of holding inquiry does not arise.

Protest by telephone subscribers of Kottayam

2001. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMi- Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the telephone subscribers in Kottayam Division, kept their receivers down for 1 hour in protest and if so what are the details thereof and estimated loss incurred as a result thereof; and

(b) whether responsibility for this state of affairs has been fixed and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO); (a) Yes Sir, out of 7600 subscribers 299 kept their receivers off- Services of the ex" change were affected partially, during staff agitation in September and October, 1988, and some subscribers kept of their receiver in protest. An estimated loss of revenue was to the tune of 3000 calls.

(b) Subscriber were requested not to resort to such action as the same would damage the equipment. One senior offi cer visited Kottayam and spoke with the subscribers who afterwards agreed to keep receivers normal. Action was taken against the staff responsible for the protest from the subscribers.